COMPASS ROSE WORKS

Author Business Planning Guide

A practical workbook for moving beyond the manuscript and building the systems, habits, relationships, and financial awareness needed to manage authorship as a business.

START WITH YOUR AUTHOR BUSINESS

Authorship can involve far more than writing. Books, appearances, speaking, direct sales, marketing, professional relationships, and ongoing expenses all create business decisions. Use this workbook to define what you want your author business to accomplish and what systems you need to support it.

Your author-business purpose

In one or two sentences, describe what you want your work as an author to accomplish.

Your 12-month picture

What would make the next year feel successful? Consider books, readers reached, revenue, events, relationships, speaking, or other goals.

BUSINESS SNAPSHOT

Books currently available: _____	**Books in development:** _____
Primary audience: _____	**Primary sales channels:** _____
Website: _____	**Business / author email:** _____

CORE BUSINESS AREAS

- Book sales and inventory
- Income and expenses
- Events, signings, and speaking engagements
- Organizations, bookstores, libraries, media, and professional contacts
- Marketing and promotion
- Follow-ups, deadlines, and commitments
- Records, files, backups, and business administration

REVENUE & SALES PLAN

Know where money may come from, even if some revenue streams are still developing.

Potential revenue streams

- Direct signed-book sales
- Website or online-store book sales
- Bookstore or retail sales / consignments
- Royalties from publisher or distributor
- Speaking fees or honoraria
- Paid webinars, seminars, or workshops
- Other author-related products or services

My three most important revenue priorities

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

BOOK & INVENTORY SNAPSHOT

Title / Format	On Hand	Typical Price	Cost per Copy

EXPENSE AWARENESS

Track business expenses consistently. Categories will vary, but common author-business expenses may include:

- Publishing, editing, design, and production
- Advertising and marketing
- Website, software, subscriptions, and technology
- Books purchased for direct sale
- Printing, promotional materials, and event supplies
- Travel, mileage, lodging, parking, and event fees
- Professional fees, education, and training

Business reminder

Good records help you understand profitability and prepare for tax and accounting conversations. Keep receipts and documentation, and consult qualified professionals for tax or legal advice.

RELATIONSHIPS, OUTREACH & FOLLOW-THROUGH

Professional relationships grow through dependable communication and consistent follow-up.

Key relationship groups

- Bookstores and retailers
- Libraries and schools
- Churches, civic groups, clubs, and community organizations
- Media, podcasts, radio, newspapers, and reviewers
- Event hosts and conference organizers
- Readers, newsletter subscribers, and supporters
- Publishers, distributors, vendors, and professional associations

OUTREACH PIPELINE

Organization / Contact	Next Action	Follow-Up Date

EVENT & OPPORTUNITY PLANNING

- Keep a central calendar of appearances, deadlines, and follow-up dates.
- Record who requested or arranged each event and the agreed terms.
- Prepare event materials and inventory in advance.
- Record sales, expenses, and outcomes after each event.
- Send thank-you communication and document future opportunities.

My relationship-building priority this quarter

MARKETING & PROFESSIONAL PRESENCE

Choose a manageable set of marketing activities that you can sustain consistently.

Marketing channels to consider

- ■ Author / business website
- ■ Email list or newsletter
- ■ Social media appropriate to your audience
- ■ Bookstore and library outreach
- ■ Local and regional media
- ■ Podcasts, interviews, and speaking opportunities
- ■ Book signings, fairs, conferences, and community events
- ■ Reader referrals and professional networking

My three marketing priorities

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

SYSTEMS CHECK

A growing author business becomes easier to manage when information has a consistent home.

- ■ I have one reliable place to track contacts and organizations.
- ■ I have a system for follow-up dates and commitments.
- ■ I can tell how many books I have on hand and where books are located.
- ■ I consistently record sales, income, and expenses.
- ■ I maintain organized digital files for contracts, receipts, graphics, and event materials.
- ■ I back up important business data and files.
- ■ I periodically review what is working and what needs attention.

BUSINESS HEALTH QUESTIONS

What part of my author business is currently the most organized?

What part creates the most confusion or lost time?

What am I doing manually that should become a repeatable system?

What commitment or follow-up is most important right now?

YOUR 90-DAY AUTHOR BUSINESS PLAN

Choose a small number of concrete actions. Progress comes from consistent follow-through, not an impossibly long task list.

Priority	Specific Action	Target Date	Done

NEXT 30 DAYS

The three actions I will complete first:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

ACCOUNTABILITY & REVIEW

I will review this plan on:	_____
Person / professional I may discuss it with:	_____
My next major milestone:	_____

NOTES

A manuscript creates a book. Consistent systems, relationships, and follow-through help create an author business.

Compass Rose Works Author Resource Series

For educational use. This workbook provides general business information and is not legal, tax, financial, or accounting advice.